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the fascinating Irish genius from Thackeray's stiff disapproval, and the work is so well done that we completely forget the biographer in the charm of the subject. He has, however, been at infinite pains to gather all available material and verify all details and has given us a book more enthralling than the whole year's fiction.

The Count Lützow, who contributed to the mediæval town series the admirable monograph on Prague and who is the author of an excellent history of Bohemian literature, is the man above all others to give us a final and authoritative *Life of Hus*.* The fact that much of the literary work of Hus has only recently been sifted and printed makes a biography, at the moment, of special value. The old tradition that all Hus's literary activity was crowded into the last few years of his life has been exploded. Dr. Flajshans enumerates seventy-four Latin, one German and thirty-six Bohemian works of Hus and divides his writings into four periods extending over the years from 1402 to his death in 1415. The Bohemian Academy has recently undertaken the publication of the Latin works of Hus and has already included several works that had never before been printed. All this recent research has thrown new light on the great patriot and martyr who paid with his life for being in advance, morally and mentally, of his age. At odds with the wide-spread immorality of the priesthood, incensed by simony and corruption in the church and by the political subjugation of his nation, Hus, with his indomitable courage, his complete self-renouncement, led a great patriotic revolt at the same time that he laid the foundations of the Reformation and the age of rationalism. His life was noble and exalted from first to last, guided by the highest principles of rectitude and devotion to truth. The present *Life*, though it suffers somewhat from repetition and amassed detail, is yet scholarly and reliable and is the best English life there is of Hus.

To those who are awaiting eagerly the authoritative biography of the last representative of the greater Victorian tradition, it

* "*The Life and Times of Master John Hus*." By the Count Lützow. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1909.

is as well at the very outset to point to the second half of the title of this book. The present volume was presented to the publisher a week before the final illness of George Meredith* and was only withdrawn later to substitute the past for the present tense. Of birth and extraction not a word is said beyond giving the date as it stands in the biographical dictionaries and the statement that he was of Irish and Welsh parentage. His first marriage is only briefly mentioned. Apart from an industrious collecting of all the published anecdotes and criticisms of Meredith, we have nothing to thank the author for but his very inadequate and wrong-headed opinions which might helpfully have been omitted. He had already gathered together a book of this kind on Stevenson, and he is of a calibre to deal much better with Stevenson than Meredith. It takes a big man to write about such an intellectual giant, and nothing is more evident than that the Lilliputian writer in this case has not the dimmest notion of the size of his subject. That he is quite blind to Meredith and his significance the two chapters on "His Poetry," "His Heroines and Women Folk," would amply serve to prove. Meredith wrote one of his most remarkable poems to demonstrate that we see in this world what we are. We should commend the master's challenge to the present collector,

"Enter these enchanted woods,
You, who dare."

The book makes scrappy and patchy reading and has not the structure nor continuity of a biography. It is, in fact, the invasion of cheap journalism into the preserves of literature. All unity of impression is broken by balancing contradictory estimates, and the point of view is shifted often enough to keep the reader dizzy. A mass of matter, good, bad and indifferent, has been thrown together with no mind to assimilate and set it together. If the material had been several times boiled down, allowed to simmer a year, then skimmed by a skilful hand and what was worth while made into a book, it would have been valuable.

Despite the fact that for the eager who treasure every anecdote, every recorded word of George Meredith, this book furnishes a wonderful witness to the dulness of critics and the chance re-

* "George Meredith: in Anecdote and Criticism." By J. A. Hamerton. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1909.

viewer, it is not the less reprehensible that our greatest should be so irreverently handled. It is enough to recognize with Robert Louis Stevenson that here was a man "built for immortality."

None who care for the early history and the daily annals of our country can afford to overlook Miss Porter's racy account of Anne Royal,* who, born in 1769, lived, looked, travelled and wrote up to a week or so of her death in 1859. She was fearless as a talker, writer and thinker and was far in advance of her age. She was a pioneer woman journalist, a Unitarian, and stood even in her earliest days for sound money, Sunday mail transportation, liberal immigration laws and religious liberty; she, of course, paid the penalty of such free exercise of her mind. She was arrested and tried as a common scold in 1829, but survived this and many other persecutions and trials, including dire poverty, with unbroken spirit. "When will the people be delivered from an implacable God, an omnipotent Devil, an endless hell!" she exclaims, at a time when these tenets were among the most treasured solaces of the human heart.

Her early pen-pictures of New York are delightful, and it may still amuse New-Yorkers to hear that so long ago it was recorded that the business which pours in upon them like a flood leaves them no time to cultivate the graces; that the ladies of New York think more of style than of literature, and that ladies in New York do not read owing to their many other sources of amusement. These pen-pictures of Anne Royal cover a host of important and well-known personages from George Washington to Abraham Lincoln and many ancestral portraits flattering and otherwise may be culled from the book. Miss Porter has proved herself an able and sympathetic biographer of this delightfully human and interesting woman.

TRAVEL.

To only two criticisms are these little conferences by Georges Cain† open: the title is a stupid one for such a delightful book,

* "The Life and Times of Anne Royal." By Sarah Harvey Porter. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1909.

† "Walks in Paris." By Georges Cain. Translated by Alfred Allinson, M.A. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909.